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23 July 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Training

SUBJECT: Comments re Public Understanding
of the Role of Intelligence

1. What AIR is doing:

We assist in the preparation of Agency employees who will be students at any external training facility, both Government and non-Government to be better ambassadors. We emphasize their role as spokesmen for not only CIA but for the overall role of intelligence in our national affairs. This preparation is accomplished by getting prospective students to read critiques from a number of different programs and having them talk with various alumni. Reading beyond that given to them in the SIWA Kit is also suggested. Our emphasis is on preparing them to be effective representatives of CIA and articulate spokesmen for the intelligence profession. Exposing them to the experience of previous students quickly convinces the prospective student of the necessity to be prepared. ✓

The information we provide arms our students with the knowledge of what has happened to their predecessors and it is unlikely that any will be surprised by a question or situation. Students are informed of the Agency's ability to respond to their requests for assistance in cultivating our public image. This was borne out in the case of Mr. Proctor's visit to Boston to talk to a private businessman's club plus the students of the AMP class.

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2. What more can be done:

Our role in preparing students for external training in their status as ambassadors can be expanded by more and better briefings but only to the extent of making the individual aware of what is expected of him. I think it is essential that he respond to questions and speak for the Agency and the intelligence profession as an individual with necessarily limited competence. If he were to attempt to answer every policy or organizational question, he would soon be beyond his depth and the effect would be counter-productive. Therefore, a man generally well informed on intelligence and CIA and expert in his specific field will make a lasting, good impression on his colleagues. The "I don't know" in answer to a question beyond his competence makes more points than a fuzzy generalization. Candor and honesty seem to pay off handsomely. ✓

I believe our students going outside are our best salesmen and the ripple effect of their attendance in a variety of courses increases their influence beyond just those people they contact directly. Classmates remember and if the impression was favorable the non-Agency classmate becomes an intelligence booster. ✓

This effort is low key, personal, and in response to a natural curiosity on the part of our student's class members. Since those we send are usually top-notch people, we can't help but make an excellent impression. I can't think of a better way to increase public understanding where it counts. ✓



Chief
Instructional Support Staff

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